لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله

إن الدين عند الله الإسلام

THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

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February 1964

ROR

EDITORS

S. D. AHMAD M. G. AHMAD

THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM

The Ahmadiyya Movement was founded in 1889 by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, India. He declared that God had conferred upon him the dignity of Prophethood. He claimed that he had received this blessing through being a perfect follower of the Holy Prophet. He claimed to be the Promised Messiah and Mahdi and the Expected Messenger of all the religions of the world. He explained that God had raised him for the purpose of re-establishing the dominion of Islam and to shed light upon the true teachings of the Holy Quran. With him, in fact, had started a new era, the renaissance of Islam.

One startling historical disclosure he made, was that Jesus Christ had escaped death at the crucifixion and had subsequently travelled to Kashmir, where his tomb still exists at Srinagar.

When Hazrat Ahmad published his claims and revelations received by him, he encountered a severe storm of opposition from all quarters and all communities. In spite of this opposition God began to strengthen his voice and people began to follow him. At the time of his death in 1908, he had gathered around him a group of faithful and staunch followers, not only in India but also in other countries, numbering hundreds of thousands.

After his death in 1908, he was succeeded by the Late Hazrat Maulvi Nuruddin Sahib as his First Khalifa. At his death in 1914, Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, the Promised Son of the Promised Messiah, was elected as his second Khalifa.

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This is an organ of the Ahmadiyya Movement which represents true Islam. It deals with religious, ethical, social and economic questions, Islamic mysticism and current topics. It also provides Book Reviews.

It is open to all for discussing problems connected with the religious and spiritual growth of man, but it does not give any assurance to publish all articles, nor does it accept any responsibility for views expressed by contributors.

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THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

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A Verse from the Holy Quran——

ان الله يامر بالعدل و الاحسان و ايتاء ذى القربى
و ينهى عن الفحشاء و المنكر و البغى

"God commands you to do good in return for good and (if you can avail yourself of an opportunity of doing more than mere justice) to do good without having received any benefit, and (if it befits the occasion) you should bestow gifts with the natural kindness of kindred ; and He forbids exceeding the limits of justice and directing goodness to a wrong end, the carrying to excess or fixing upon an improper object the feeling of tenderness". (16 : 91)

The verse mentions three moral qualities by which man can do good to his fellow-beings. The first of these qualities is *Adl* or justice. *Adl* implies that a man should do good in return for good, that he should treat others as he is treated by

them. The second is *Ihsan* i.e. kindness or goodness, which means that a man in his treatment of others, should have no regard for the kind of treatment he receives from them. He should do good to his fellow-beings and should treat them with kindness and generosity regardless of the sort of treatment he has received at their hands. The third quality is *Eetai zil Qurba* i.e. the tenderness and kindness as of kindered, which means that a man should do good to others without any idea or hope of return or appreciation and should do it as a result of natural inner urge to do good.

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The most obvious example of this is that of a mother. Sometimes she brings up her children under very difficult circumstances. She sacrifices her own self for them, and even the idea of getting repaid or being appreciated never crosses her thoughts. It is a sort of natural and uncontrollable urge for her to bear hardships in making their life easy and comfortable.

The three moral qualities mentioned in the verse quoted above are, in fact, three stages in the moral development of man. The first and the lowest of the three stages is *Adl* in which man does good to his benefactors alone. Even an ordinary person who can appreciate the goodness of others acquires this quality and does good in return for good. Higher than *Adl* is the stage of *Ihsan*. At this stage, man takes the initiative to do good to others. It consists in showing kindness and tenderness to those who otherwise have no right. This quality is the second stage. Excellent as it is, it is not yet free from all imperfections. An infirmity attached to it is that sometime the doer of good is led to show off or to boast of it.

The third and the most exalted stage is *Eetai zil Qurba*. It is free from all infirmities and from all imperfections. To attain to this stage, man should not think of the good he has done nor should he expect gratitude from the person to whom the kindness is shown. The good action should proceed from the kind of sincere sympathy and natural love like that we feel for the nearest of kin. This stage is the last and the highest stage of kindness. Beyond this there is nothing to aspire to for doing good to the creatures of Allah.

At all stages of doing good, an important essential condition has been imposed by God. The condition is that every good should be done on an appropriate occasion, and only when the circumstances justify it. It means that unless exercised with great care and prudence these noble qualities are liable to degenerate into vice and evil. Thus the quality of *Adl* becomes *Fahsha* i.e. an undue excess, productive of harm ; *Ihsan* becomes *Munkar* i.e. something which conscience rejects ; *Eetai zil qurba* becomes *Baghye* or oppression ;

Thus, according to Islam the doing of good to others constitutes a high moral quality only when good is done and kindness is shown in keeping with the prevailing circumstances. The three forms of doing good which are mentioned above, are only natural qualities, which are transformed into high moral virtues if they are accompanied by regard for the occasion and sound judgement.

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Muhammad has Spoken

N. R. A. G. Soofi

Is mankind one family? The question has long engaged the attention of scholars, scientists, and jurists. It has sparked explosive situations throughout the history of mankind. There has been wide and sharp divergence of views. The imperialists, in order to justify their loot campaigns, divided men into classes. The Aryans, the Romans, the Scythians, the Semitics held fast to the chosen race belief. Valour in battlefield and successful savagery gave birth to pride of ancestry and fed the arrogance of tribal heroes, serving as a perennial source of dynastic wars, rapine and slave markets.

The modern age has seen the rise of the white people as the super race, an idea fortified by the power that applied science has placed in their hands.

The White man's belief that he has a higher destiny and that the coloured are social pariahs has been a hurting and glaring fact. The two do not mix and tend to gravitate to their respective colour groups.

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The 200 year supremacy enjoyed by the western peoples in world conquest, in world trade, in scientific advancemet, in destructive potential, in industrial expansion, and in wealth, as against pathetic poverty, timid submission, listless resignation and awesome ignorance of the coloured nations, encouraged and even hardened the superior attitude of the White man. For decades the coloured nations kowtowed before their white masters. They seemed to have lost faith and hope and the will to fight back believing that the sun would never rise on them.

Two wars in Europe involving White Powers pulled the coloured forcibly into the arena. They fought shoulder to shoulder with their White rulers. The superior race needed them more as comrades and buddies than as human barbecue and gun fodder.

The battle of the White against White ended in uneasy truce. But for the coloured his own battle had just begun.

He has been waging it since and doing very well all over ; in fact far better than his White superior. Asia is free today. Africa is well on the way to full emancipation. In America the strife is the fiercest. It is here that the basic issue involved in the struggle stands out in stark nakedness.

All men are equal and born free is the fundamental fact that the battle in Mississippi, in Louisiana, In Georgia, in Maryland and in all the Deep South, shall decide. Old hatreds are turning hoses and hounds on freedom-fighters. There is fury in hearts and anger on tongues. The coloured have a just case and justice must and shall win out in the end. All the signs are there and all the bars are slowly coming down.

But the issue is in grave danger of being confused. A corrupting note has been introduced. The fight against super race theory is being turned into a fight between two super races : which one is the superior, the Black or the White ?

The super race babble is a wicked myth but men have ever been misled to believe in and die for myths.

Is the motive behind this move to blunt the edge of the Negro campaign for equality in job opportunity, in civic responsibility, in public facilities and in citizenship rights ? Is it to give the Southern Whites the weapon they need to avert a last-time defeat ? It offers them a new battle-field and perhaps an equally good cause to which even the desegregationist White could rally. In that case it could easily end in another century of serfdom and suffering for the coloured American.

There is nothing better, nothing more just, nothing more human and nothing worthier than equality. It gives no pain : it offers no insult : it leaves no regrets and it causes no shame. It makes for peace as between neighbor and neighbor. It gives a foundation to justice, an inspiration to human kindliness, a buttress to social peace, a leaven to patriotism, a harmony to national development and an impetus to cultural progress.

The White man must, in his own interest, eventually climb down the uneasy pedestal. Men are basically the same everywhere. They have similar hopes and fears, same passions and pleasures. They are learning it the hard way. They are seek-

ing to learn and teach it in embattled atmosphere. And at what painful cost! Is harted an answer to harted? The new-fangled counter-hatred is being preached in the name of Islam. It is a dirty lie. Islam does not preach hatred.

Close on to founrteen hundred years ago, the message of the Super Prophet Mohammad (570-632A.D.) the Holy Founder of Islam has been arousing millions of people to a practical realization of the universal brotherhood of man. It repudiates every race theory excepting one, that all men are equal, that the human family is one society without a priesthood or a princely breed, a society without privileges for the few and without favours for the chosen.

On his last Pilgrimage to Mecca, in his farewell address to Muslims, the Prophet said,

> "O ye people, hear my speech, I do not know whether I will be meeting you here after this year. O ye people, your blood and your property and your honour are as inviolate among you until you meet your Lord, as are inviolate this day and this month and this city. Whoso has with him the trust of the other, he should tender it back to him. Every kind of interest is forbidden this day. The interest due to Abbas ibne Muttalib (an uncle of the Prophet) is written off today. All the blood-shed in the time of ignorance is forgiven. I forgive first the blood of Ibne Rabie bin Haris bin Abdul Muttalib.
>
> "God has appointed for every one a share in the property. No 'Will' shall now be accepted that wrongs a rightful heir. A child born in a house shall be regarded as the child of the father in that house.
>
> "O men, you have some rights over your wives. Your wives also have rights over you. Your right over them is that they should lead chaste lives and should never take to ways that bring shame to the husband in the sight of the people.

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"Your duty is to provide them with food and garment and shelter according to your own standard. Remember, you should always treat your wives well. God has charged you with the duty of taking good care of them. Woman is weak and cannot protect her own rights. God has appointed you the trustees of those rights.

"O men, you still have with you some prisoners of war. I advise you to feed them and clothe them in the same way and style as you feed and clothe yourselves.

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"O ye people, what I say to you, you should hear and remember. All Muslims are as brethren to one another. All of you are equal. All men of whatever nation or tribe, and of whatever position are equal".

Then lifting his two hands, the Prophet placed the fingers of one against the other and said,

"Even as the fingers of the two hands are equal, so are human beings equal to one another. No one has any right, nor any preference to claim over another, you are brothers".

Then he asked,

"Do you know what month is this? What city we are in? What day of the year it is today?"

Saying that it was the sacred month, the sacred city, and the sacred day, the Prophet then warned,

"Even as this month is sacred, this town sacred and this day sacred, so has God made the lives, property and honour of every man sacred."

Concluding, he said,

"What I enjoin you today is not for today only. It is for all times to come. You should remember it and observe it until you leave this world and go to the next to meet your Creator.

What I have said to you, carry it to the ends

of the world. Maybe the one who has not heard benefits thereby more than the one who has."

It is a great speech, the greatest for all times. Every aspect of human relationship has been taken care of—human dignity, family life and its sanctity, human compassion and social obligations—all find healthy expression, making human brotherhood a living, progressive and solid reality. The current battle for equality in the United States is being waged with all the main and might by the contending parties. The Negro is winning at every step and he is getting a lot of help from the American press, public leaders and the United States Government. It is one of the most dramatic moments in America's star-spangled history. Federal troops are in the thick of the strife not to conquer new lands but to conquer hearts that have been hurt deeply by the White men. The revolt of Barneths and Wallaces today is the death-bed of primitive barbarism. Let no fake messenger tinker with the fortunes of a long-suffering people whose shackles are falling apart. And let none inject racial venom into the explosive atmosphere in the name of Islam!

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GLORIOUS MORNING

B.A. Orchard

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'Tis ID - the happiest day of the year
As azan calls Muslims to morning prayer.
Like sweet heaven on earth, as it were,
The songs of angels seem to fill the air.

This is no day for bitter talk ;
No moment for faces taut and dark.
Have not our souls become like chalk
Lightening us with its hallowed mark ?

Ecstasy sublime fills the soul ;
Divine lustre illumines the face.
The sick body becomes well and whole.
All praise to Allah for His wondrous Grace.

Was Jesus the Creator of Birds?

Mirza Nasir Ahmad M.A. (Oxon)
(Translated by Mirza Anas Ahmad M.A.)

"The same day went Jesus out of the house and sat by the sea side. And great multtiudes were gathered together unto him so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, "Behold a sower went forth to sow ; And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up. Some fell upon stony places where they had not much earth and forthwith they sprang up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

"And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up and cooked them. But others fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundred fold, some sixty fold, some thirty fold. Who hath ears to hear let him hear.

"And the disciples came, and said unto him why speakest thou unto them in parables?

"He answered and said unto them, 'Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given' ". (Mathew 13, 1—4)

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One distinctive characteristic of the Holy Quran is that it does not simply narrate the life - histories of the prophets but also depicts them in a manner as would throw light on their characters and reveal their personalities. For this purpose it adopts a special style, the basic and most prominent feature of which is that a verse in which any thing is said of a prophet has the strain of that prophet in it. It is a lengthy subject into the details of which I cannot enter here. To substantiate my claim, however, I would give two instances from the Holy Quran. Hazrat Ibrahim was very fond of holding discussions with his opponents about matters of religion. Consequently the Quran also gives his narrative mostly

in the form of discussions between him and his opponents. The account of Jesus in the Quran is another instance. Jesus loved to speak in parables, as would be clear from the quotation from the New Testment given in the very beginning of this article. He would present facts to his audience clothed in metaphors and hidden in similies. He would not "cast his pearls to swines". Thus giving his account the Quran also employs a highly figurative language. Allegorical strain is dominant throughout the verses in which anything is said of him. For instance, we read in the Quran:

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و رسولا الى بنى اسرائيل آنى قد جئتكم باية من ربكم
آنى آخلق لكم من الطين كهيئة الطير فانفخ فيه فيكون
طيراً بأذن الله وأبرأ الاكمه والابرص و أحى الموتى
باذن الله و أنبئكم بما تاكلون وما تدخرون فى بيوتكم
ان فى ذلك لاية لكم ان كنتم مومنين ـ

"And We will make him a Messenger to the children of Israel (to say) I come to you with a sign from your Lord, which is that I will fashion out for you a creation out of clay, after the manner of a bird then I will breathe into it a new spirit and it will become a soaring being by the command of Allah and I will heal the night-blind and the leprous and I will quicken the dead, by the command of Allah and I will announce to you what you will eat and what you will store up in your houses. Surely therein is a Sign for you, if you be believers" (Al-Imran, 49).

And again:

و اذ تخلق من الطين كهيئة الطير باذنى فتنفخ فيها فتكون
طيراً باذنى و الابرص باذنى و اذ تخرج الموتى باذنى ـ

"And when thou didst fashion a creation out of clay, in the likeness of a bird by My command and then thou didst breathe into it a new spirit

> and it became a soaring being by My Command; and thou didst heal the night-blind and the leprous by My command, and when thou didst raise the dead by My command". (Al-Maidah 110)

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To all intents and purposes, the above verses are metaphorical, and at no cost, should be understood literally. But it is sad that many scholars of Islam, unable to appreciate this point, took them literally. They had, infact, such a strong love for the literal interpretation of the Quran that they could not help doing so. Naturally their interpretations became asbolutely vapid and barren, devoid of all true religious and philosophic significance and depth of meaning. Thus the best that they could do was to give to these verses meanings so crude and flat as were sufficient to blind their eyes, leaving them absolutely incapable of seeing the real Beauty and the Truth of the Quran. In this self-created darkness they could make conjectures only—conjectures which were, sure, full of contradictions. It would be interesting here to note some of the inconsistencies in the meanings assigned by them to the verses:

(١) اخلق لكم من الطين كهيئة الطير

(٢) واذ تخلق من الطين

(1) Some of theUlema believe that Christ actually showed the miracle of fashioning birds out of clay which became alive when he breathed his spirit into them. These birds flew as the birds made by Allah fly and they ate as the birds made by Him, eat.

(2) Others believe that the birds made by Christ lived, flew and ate only as long as they were before the eyes of the audience in front of which they were created. They died when the audience got dispersed.

(3) A third group believes Messiah could create bats alone and not every bird. However the bats created by him lived as long as ordinary baste do.

(4) Still another group deems it wrong and heretic to limit the creative powers of Jesus to bats alone. This group believes

that Jesus could create any bird he willed to.

It goes further and says, to our confusion and dismay, that the birds created by him have constantly been perpetuating themselves. So that now we have a whole host of them, but so thoroughly mixed up with birds made by Allah that indentification is imposible to make.

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The difference of opinion among the Ulema and interpreters of the Quran regarding these verses is a clear proof of the fact that the traditions on which these interpretations are based are not trustworthy. But, besides this, there are other weighty and convincing arguments, both rational and inductive, which clearly disprove the claim to the creative powers of Jesus. We shall give here only three of them.

(1) Had Jesus really shown such supernatural miracles, such God - like powers, he would certainly have attracted the attention of his people and the whole of the world would have become interested in him. Every person, small or great, would have accepted his claims without the slightest hesitation or doubt. From far and wide people would have swarmed upon him in multitudes to get eternal blessings from his hand; and they would have swamped him with requests to raise their dead—brother asking for the life of his brother, father of his son, widow of her husband. To please him and to win his favour they would have obeyed him and followed him in all earnestness, with an unparalled devotion and submission. They would have poured upon him oblations and literally burried him under them. Poor peasants carrying their carts of mud behind them would have called upon him, and cried!

> "O Lord! we are poor. You possess great powers. You have created birds out of clay. Look upon our poverty; have mercy upon us; and make us also some oxen and cows, so that we, too, are relieved of our wretched plight".

In short, every man and woman, every one small or great, poor or rich, illiterate or learned, spell bound by him would have accepted his claim to prophethood. Nay, even to godhead, had he made any. But facts are to the contrary. None except

a small and petty number of disciples accepted his claim ; and even they were not so stout in their avowed love for him as to stand the test of persecution. There were many who deserted him when they were expected most to remain beside him. One of them even cursed him without feeling a grain of shame. Such were the men, he, the alleged partner of Almighty, produced and such their faith and loyalty for him. And his enemies .....well they were in legion. And seemingly they had all the power to exert against this mighty man in order to torture and torment and persecute him ! He behaved before them as helplessly as a lamb before beasts. His preaching, his pleas, fell flat upon their ears ; their hatred for him reached its climax when finally they put him on the Cross with the evil intention of killing him on it so that he might die a cursed death. Alas ! the man who used to give life to others could not by himself turn away from him the chances of his own death. All his alleged power and strength failed him when he needed it for himself. The creator of birds, the quickener of the dead, could but only cry and weep for the Succour of his Lord. He declared on the Cross that all power in fact belongs to Allah and Allah alone and none to himself. Must then one insist that Jesus was the creator of birds ?

(2) Christians in their passion to prove the godhead of Christ do not hesitate even to attribute to him miracles that he never showed. They would have necessarily attributed this also miracle to him, were this a matter of history, as believed by some Muslims. But they don't. No mention of it is found in the New Testament. Rather it is made by Christian scholars a point of criticism against the Quran that Christ showed any such miracle. It is unfortunate that some ignorant Muslims should give them this opportunity.

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(3) To insist on the literal understanding of the verses and believe that Jesus literally created birds is no less than a heresy even if this belief were qualified by the statement that he could show such miracles only by the command of Allah. The reason for calling such a belief a heresy is that it amounts to polytheism. If God can bestow His special divine attributes on some one else, even though willingly, His Godhead in its

monotheistic significanee stands disproved. For in such a case, God should also by sheer force of logic, have the power to make lesser beings a partner in the exercise of all of His attributes.....which amounts to saying that He should have the power to make one or more than one gods like Himself for a short time or permanently.

Thus sound reasoning repels such a thought ; Islamic spirit is out and out against it and the teachings of the Holy Quran forcefully reject it.

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The Holy Quran says :

ذالكم الله ربكم لا اله الا هو خالق كل شئى فاعبدوه

وهو على كل شبئ وكيل ـ

"Such is Allah, your Lord ; There is no God but He. The Creator of all things. So worship Him. And He is Guardian over every thing". (Al-Anam, 103)

Again,

ام جعلوالله شركاء خلقوا كخلقه فتشابه الخلق عليهم

قل الله خالق كل شئ وهو الواحد القهار

'Or do they assign to Allah partners who have created like of His, so that the two creations appear similar to them ? Say Allah alone is the Creator of All things and He is the One, the most Supreme". (Al-Raid 17)

These, like many other verses, are a clear proof to the effect that none can be a partner of Allah.

The above discussion should have made it sufficiently clear to the reader that we cannot assign literal meanings to the verses of Al-Maidah and Al-Imran under discussion. We must give them meanings which would be reasonable and in accordance with the spirit of the Holy Quran. Knowing that Messiah loved to speak in parables it should not be difficult to see that these verses are figurative in character and need a sound interpretation. But before attempting on any interpretation I should like to explain some important words and expressions

in the verses. In the verse of Al-Maidah the word اخلق (I fashion out) is used. It is derived from خلق. Besides its ordinary meanings to produce or create it also means to measure or to determine the measure or proportion of a thing. We read in the Quran,

هو الذى خلق لكم ما فى الارض جميعاً

"He is One who has measured whatever is created in the world". (Al-Baqarah 29)

The word طين means clay and the word هيئة means to provide and to give form. In this context the expression كهيته الطير means like birds give to the clay (of egg) the form (of birds).

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The Symbol of 'Bird'

Bird طير is a symbol used especially in the Bible to denote the poor holy people, and the Holy Spirit. We read in the Bible :

"And straight away coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened and the spirit like dove, descending upon him". (Mark 1 : 10)

The simile of bird is used again in the verse :

"Therefore I say unto you take no thought of your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink ; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body more than raiment. (26) Behold the fowls of the air for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns : yet your heavenly father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they ?" (Matthew 25 : 26)

The symbolic use of the word طير is also very common in Islamic literature. The use of the word طير in the sense we have given it here is found at many places in the Quran. The birds of Ibrahim (peace be upon him) in fact belong to the spiritual realm. Similarly the birds which are mentioned in the verse :

يا جبال اوبى معه و الطير

'O ye mountains, repeat the praise of Allah with him and O' birds ye also". (Saba 10)

are not the birds that we see flying in the air. They are rather pious men who have received orders from the heavens to come in the Bait of Daud (peace be upon him) and to show obedience to him. Daud the second———The Promised Messiah, peace be upon him———was also given such men who were described in his revelation in the words of the Quran. Thus he received the revelation.

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يا جبال اوبى معه و الطير

'O ye mountains, repeat the praise of Allah, and O' birds ye also'.

Another revelation of his explains this revelation. Allah revealed to him :

ينصرك رجال نوحى اليهم من السماء

"Men whom we shall reveal from the heavens will help you".

Men of understanding can't doubt that طير or bird, occuring in the first revelation and رجال or men occuring in the second both in fact have the same reference. Also, in a tradition of the Holy Prophet of Islam, peace be upon him, the true believers are named as طير .

Thus :

قال رسول الله يدخل الجنة اقوام افئدتهم

مثل افئدة الطير

"The Holy Prophet, peace be on him said that the people who shall enter heavens would be those whose hearts are like those of birds."

After having explained these words now I shall explain the verse :

انى اخلق لكم من الطين كهيئة الطير

فانفخ فيه فيكون طيراً باذن الله

"I will fashion out for you a creation out of clay after the manner of a bird then I will breathe into it a new spirit and it will become a soaring being by the command of Allah".

In these verses Jesus says :

"There are among you some who are like clay for they can easily accept spiritual influence as clay can be easily impressed and moulded in human hand. Allah has ordained for them that after taking them under my guidance, I shall first of all take their clay, as it were, in my hands and moulding it transform it so that they are distinguished from other animals and become like birds who after taking further moral training are enabled to sour high in the lofty regions of spiritual firmament. I would do all this as birds hatch the clay (of an egg), and give it the form of a chick which after taking some more warmth from the bossom of the parent bird is enabled to fly high in the sky".

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Then he says, that after this preliminary moral training he would breathe into them the holy spirit and thereby bring about therein a change that would resemble the state described in the Quran as :

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'He being pleased with thee and thou with Him'.

They would then become spiritually so strong as to be able to dart straight to Allah like mighty grown up birds which dart towards the sky with might and force. There is nothing unique about this message. This is a promise that every prophet has given to his true followers. This is a promise which has always in the end come before the world in the shape of a great miracle. But the greatest miracle, and the most glorious one, was that which the world saw when the promise of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to his true followers came to fulfilment. His was a formidable task. He was to educate and moralize a herd of beduins whose corruption was of the

worst possible kind and degree, as repulsive and distasteful to a civilized man as a foul, filthy and putrid smell of decay is to a sensitive nature. He took such a people under his guidance. He made their spirits which were wolloying in the filth of vice soar high in the heavens for sweet and fragrant nature. And they who were once hateful and obnoxious became beloveds of God, and from the heavens He called them 'O thou Soul ! that art at rest and restest fully contented with thy Lord return unto Him. He being pleased with Him'.

To conclude : In Islamic literature as in the New Testament the word طیر is used to denote pious people, or the Holy Spirit. Thus we are not entitled to take the word when it occurs in the verses quoted from Al-Maidah and Al-Imran literally and assert that Jesus created birds. Any such claim is absolutely false. It is against the teachings of Islam and it is not supported by the Christian religion.

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Jesus and His Mother . . . Their Immunity from Evil Influences

Maulana Abul Ata.

The Holy Quran, being the Word of God, All-knowing and All-Wise, undertakes to brush away all the false allegations which the enemies of prophets ascribe to, and level against them. This holy class of people, who are sent down by God, as models of humanity, are subjected to severe and adverse criticism by their opponents. The Jews failed to recognise in Jesus Christ a true prophet of God, because they gravely doubted the legitimate birth of Jesus and the chastity of his mother, Mary. The birth of Jesus without the agency of father was a stumbling block to them. They could not believe that a virgin could possibly conceive without the agency of a man. So they disbelieved him and said,

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> "Thou hast a devil"[1] ; "Thou art a Samaritan and hast a devil."[2] and, "He hath a devil and is mad ; why hear ye him".[3]

They could not boldly refute the Jewish charge concering the birth of Jesus. Their attitude was simply apologetic. The New Testament does not clarify the position of Mary and her son, rather it makes it even more obscure and ambiguous. For we read in the New Testament :

> "And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan"[4] ;

And agaln :

> "And, behold, a woman in the city which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house brought an alabaster box of ointment. And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears and did wipe them with the hairs of her head and kissed his feet and annointed them with the ointment". ([5])

But the Holy Quran positively declares that Jesus Christ was a true prophet of God and, on that ground, he was immune

from the evil influences of Satan and his mother was a truthful woman who protected her chastity, hence the Jews were wrong and their allegations concerning Jesus and his mother were baseless. The Holy Quran says :

والتی احصنت فرجها فنفخنا فیها من روحنا و جعلناها و ابنها آیةللعالمین

"And remember her who preserved her chastity ; so We breathed into her of Our word and We made her and her son a Sign for peoples." The Holy Quran (21 : 29)

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Again God says :

و اذ قالت الملائکة یا مریم ان الله اصطفاک و طهر ک

و اصطفاک علی نساء العالمین

"And remember when the angels said, O Mary, Allah has chosen thee and purified thee and chosen thee above the women of all peoples." (3 : 43.)

ما المسیح ابن مریم الا رسول قد خلت من

قبله الرسل و امة صدیقة

"The Messiah, son of Mary, was only a Messenger ; surely, messengers like unto him had indeed passed away before him. And his mother was a truthful lady." (5 : 76)

The study of the Quranic verses quoted above, leads us to conclude that Mary was a truthful lady, she preserved her chastity as long as she was devoted to the service of the temple her conception when she was still in the service of the temple was due to the good tidings the angel of God had brought her. Her conception was neither supernatural nor illegitimate. The birth of a child by a virgin may be said to be out of the ordinary but it was not supernatural. To quote only one medical authorithy :

"Medical men have not ruled out altogether the possibility of natural parthenogenesis or the production of a child by a female, without any relation to a male. Such a statement off-hand appears

ridiculous, yet its possibility, from a purely biological stand point, under certain conditions cannot be disregarded. Dr. Timme calls attention to this possibility as the result of a certain type of tumors, known as arrhenoblastoma (from the Greek words for 'male and 'germ') which are occasionally found in the female pelvis or lower body. These tumors are capable of generating males perm-cells. Naturally if these male sperm-cells were alive and active and came in contact with the female's own egg-cell or ovum, conception might occur. There is nothing illogical in this process of reasoning.....Dr. Timme states that there are twenty authentic cases reported in Europe in which an arrhenoblastoma had been found to develop male sperm-cells.....The arrhenoblastoma is a tumor that eontains blastodermic cells..... These cells are creative structures and are capable of development at any time and the fact, there fore, that arrhenoblastoma containing these "embryonic cells" might create testicular issue, capable of producing male sperm-cell seems scientifically not impossible. If living male sperm-cells are produced in a female body by arrhenobastoma the possibility of self-fertilization of a woman, though a virgin, cannot be denied. That is to say, her own body would producethe same result as though sperm-cells from a man's body had been transferred to hers in the more usual way, or by a physician's aid".[6]

This rather lengthy quotation is sufficient to prove that self-fertilization of a woman even though a virgin is medically not an impossibility.

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"There are cases on record of children having been born without fathers. A young girl of great moral purity became pregnant without the slightest knowledge of the source... There is a case of pregnancy in an unmarried woman, who success-

fully resisted an attempt at criminal connection and yet became impregnated and gave birth to a perfect female child". [7]

The Quranic statement of Mary's conception and her giving birth to a son is simply dramatic.

Says the Holy Quran :

فارسلنا اليها روحنا فتمثل لها بشراً سوياً
قالت انى اعوذ بالرحمن منك ان كنت
تقيا قال انما انا رسول ربك لاهب لك
غلاماً زكيا قالت انى يكون لى غلام و لم
يمسسنى بشر ولم اك بغيا ـ قال كذالك قال
ربك هو على هين . و لنجعله اية للناس
و رحمة منا و كان امراً مقضيا فحملته فانتبذت
به مكانا قصيا .

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"We sent Our angel to her (Mary) and he appeared to her in the form of a perfect man. She said, "I seek refuge with the Gracious God from thee if indeed thou dost fear Him".

"He replied, I am only a Messenger of thy Lord, that I may bestow on thee a righteous son'. She said, 'How can I have a son when no man has touched me, neither have I been unchaste'. He replied, 'Thus it is but says thy Lord, 'It is easy for Me ; and We shall do so that We may make him a Sign unto men, and a mercy from Us, and it is a thing decreed'. So She conceived him and withdrew with him to a remote place."[8]

The glad tidings of the birth of a son which the angel of God gave to Mary, caused her to concieve and we have already shown that medically it is not impossible that a virgin may concieve and give birth to a child. The calumny brought against her by the

Jews, therefore, does not hold ground. The birth was legitimate and natural. There is also a tradition narrated by Abu Huraira, a companion of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be on him). The Holy Prophet is reported to have said.

ان النبی صل الله علیه وسلم قال ما من مولود یولد الا
والشیطان یمسه حین یولد فستحل صارخاً من مس
الشیطان ایاه الا مریم و ابنها ثم یقول ابوهریرة و
اقراو ان شیتم و انی اعوذها بک و ذریتها من
الشیطان الرجیم .

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"No child is born in the world but Satan touches it at the time of its birth, and it begins to cry, except Mary and her son".[9]

Abu Huraira asks the reader to refer to the Quranic verse

انی اعوذها بک و ذریتها من الشیطان الرجیم .

"And I commit her and her offspring to Thy protection from Satan, the rejected".

This tradition declares Mary to be chaste and free from all moral blemishes, but the Christian missionary distorts it in such a way as to show that all children are born sinful, with the exception of Jesus Christ who was born sinless and hence he was the son of God. Nothing can be far from the truth. All children are born sinless, it is only their parents who put them on the wrong track by their misguided training. The best explanation of the above-quoted tradition may safely be given in the words of Hazrat Ahmad of Qadian, the Promised Messiah, who says :

"Every prophet is immune from the evil influences of the Satan but the tradition of the Holy Prophet that Mary and her son were immune from the evil influences of Satan is significant because the Jews held Mary to be a woman of doubtful character and her son to be an illegitimate son ; and God Almighty wanted to

clarify Mary and her son from all such wicked allegations, hence the words of the Holy Prophet that Mary and her son were free from the evil influences; that is to say, that adultery is an act of Satan while Mary is immune from this evil. It does not mean that only Mary and her son are immune while others are not."[10]

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Again he says:

> Similarly the traditions telling us that Mary and her son were immune from evil influences does not mean that other prophets were not immune from evil influences, but it simply means that the charge of illegitimate birth of Jesus Christ by the Jews was baseless and must be rejected.[11]

The Holy Quran and the Great Prophet to whom it was revealed have placed Mary and her son under a heavy debt of gratitude by declaring them free from the grave charges levelled against them by the Jews. Islam declares all prophets of God to be inmmune from all the evil influences of Satan and the Holy Prophet ordained his followers to use the epithet عليه السلام (peace be on him) after the name of each and every prophet of God whoever he might be, so that every one of the prophets was free from the evil influences of Satan.

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Fasting in Ramazan

CH. Ali Muhammad B.A.BT.

یاایها الذین آمنوا کتب علیکم الصیام کما کتب علی
الذین من قبلکم لعلکم تتقون ۔ ایاماً معدودات فمن کان
منکم مریضاً او علی سفر فعدة من ایام اخر و علی الذین
یطیعونه فدیة طعام مسکین۔ فمن یطوع خیراً فهو خیر له
و ان تصوموا خیرلکم ان کنتم تعلمون شهر رمضان الذی
انزل فیه القرآن هدی للناس و بینت من الهدی و الفرقان
فمن شهد منکم الشهر فلیصمه و من کان مریضاً او علی
سفر فعدة من ایام اخرط یرید الله بکم الیسر ولا یرید
بکم العسر ولتکملوا العدة و لتکبروا الله علی ماهدکم
و لعلکم تشکرون . و اذا سالک عبادی عنی فانی قریب
اجیب دعوة الداع اذا دعان فلسیتجیبوالی ولیومنوابی
لعلهم یرشدون ۔

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"O ye who believe ! fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may become righteous. The prescribed fasting is for a fixed number of days, but whoso among you is sick or is on a journey shall fast the same number of other days ; and for those who are able to fast only with great difficulty is an expiation—the feeding of poor man: And whoso performs a good work with willing obedience, it is better for him. And fasting is good for you, if you only knew. The month of Ramadan is that in which the Quran was sent down as a guidance for mankind with clear proofs of guidance and discrimination. Therefore, whosoever of you is present at home

in this month, let him fast therein. But whoso is sick or is on a journey, shall fast the same number of other days. Allah desires to give you facility and He desires not hardship for you, and that you may complete the number, and that you may exalt Allah for His having guided you and that you may be grateful.

"And when My servants ask thee about Me, say : I am near. I answer the prayer of the supplicant when he prays to Me. So they should hearken to Me and believe in Me, that they may follow the right way". 2 : 86

Fasting is a time-old institution prescribed by all the rcligions of the world and differently practised by their votaries. The aim of fasting throughout the ages has been the practice of self-denial and purification of self for spiritual uplift. Judaism, Christanity, Hinduism and Confucianism have all prescribed fasting as an act of self-denial. Islam as the last and universal religion for mankind could not fail to recommend fasting for its followers as an act of self-denial, purification of the heart and an excellent means of communion with God.

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The aim of this article is not to discuss the various forms of fasting as recommended by different religions for their votaries but the purpose which Islam requires its followers always to keep in view is a life based on piety and the service of humanity. Fasting teaches the Muslims a practical lesson in the worship of God and the service of His creatures. Muslims observe fasts for no other purpose than that of obedience to the will of God. They abstain from food and drink from daybreak to sunset simply because God Almighty requires them to keep this commandment of His. Muslims while fasting do not make use of even those things which rightfully belong to them ; this is in complete obedience to the commandment of God. A full one month's practice inculcates in them the habit of denying the use of things which are legally their own, and as a corollary, they cannot be expected to make use of things which do not belong to them but they belong to others. So far the service of humanity is concerned, Msulims are enjoined to be

liberally charitable, particularly during the month of Ramazan. The Holy Prophet of Islam is reported to be profusely liberal in this month. It is reported by Salman, a companion of the Holy Prophet that a Muslim who invites a fellow-Muslim to break his fast with him becomes entitled to a reward from God which is far beyond his expectations. A Muslim who helps another Muslim with food and drink so that he may be able to keep fast deserves the highest reward.

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Fasting, during the month of Ramazan, is a form of worship which is of the highest importance after the prayers. It is a form of worship which is purely undertaken to please God. Fasting, in the strict sense of the word, is free from show or affectation and on that score promises reward from God which is beyond imagination. A tradition of the Holy Prophet says that God Himself is the reward of fasting.

During the month of Ramazan a person develops a sort of resemblence with God. Like God, he abstains from food and drink. He is righteous, and never tells a lie. He observes piety, he looks to the needs of others. He spends most of his time in the remem-erance of God and during the last ten days of Ramazan he keeps aloof from family and all worldly affairs. In short, every moment of his life is dedicated to the will of God and the service of humanity. Thus he is enabled to develop in him a spiritual power which helps him to hold communion with God. He sees true dreams and visions and receives revelation from God. A Muslim enjoys spiritual experiences in proportion to his spiritual power he develops during this month.

Last, though not the least, is the acceptance of prayers which is the chief characteristic of the month of Ramazan. It is also the common experience of believers that prayers offered during this month, particularly on the night known as the Night of Destiny, which invariably occurs during the odd nights of the last ten days of Ramazan, are heard by God. This characteristic is unique in Islam.

We may conclude this brief article by quoting a tradition of the Holy Prophet of Islam as narrated by Hazrat Salman, one of his companions :

يا ايها الناس قد اظلكم شهر عظيم شهر مبارک شهر
فيه ليلة خير من الف شهر - جعل الله صيامه فريضة و
قيام ليله تطوعاً من تقرب فيـــه بخصلة مـن الخير
كان كمن ادى فريضة فيما سواه - وهو شهر الصبر و
الصبر ثوابه الجنة و شهر المواساة و شهر يزاد
رزق المومن - من فطر فيه صائما كان له وقاية و مغفرة
لذ نوبه و عتق رقبته من النار و كان له مثل اجره من
غير ان ينتقض من اجره شيئى يعطى الله هذا الثواب من
فطر صائماً على مذقة لبن او تمرة او شربة من ماء
و من اشبع صائماً سقاه الله من حوضى شربة لا يظما
حتى يدخل الجنة و هو شهر اوله رحمة و اوسطه مغفرة
و آخره عتق من النار و من خفف عن مملوكه فيه
غفرالله له و اعتقه من النار (مشكواة)

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"O ye people, a month, grand and full of blessings, is approaching you. In it there comes a night which is better than even 1000 months. God has enjoined upon you the fasting in this month as an obligatory worship and standing in prayers at midnight, though optional, but is full of belssings. The reward of optional prayers in this month is equal to the reward of compulsory praperys in other months. It is the month for showing patience and the reward of patience is nothing less than paradise. It is the month for showing mutual sympathy and fellow-feeling. In this month a believer's income is increased. One, who invites a fasting man to break his fast with him at sunset, can hope for the forgiveness of his sins, his reward will be as much as the reward of the fasting man even for

a tumbler of water-milk, a piece of date, or a cup of tea. And a person who feeds a fasting man to a fill, will drink deep at my own cistern in paradise. The first part of this month is a means of the mercy of God, the middle one is the cause of the forgiveness of sins and the last part brings freedom from the fire of hell. One who reduces the hours of work of his servant during this month will be saved from the hell fire".

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